

Message

From: Jeannine Hale [Hale.Jeannine@epamail.epa.gov]
Sent: 4/11/2012 3:44:49 PM
To: Israel Anderson [Anderson.Israel@epamail.epa.gov]; James Leathers [Leathers.James@epamail.epa.gov]
CC: Troy Hill [Hill.Troy@epamail.epa.gov]
BCC: Jeannine Hale
Subject: Fw: Rescheduled: Corpus IWG planning mtg. (Apr 12 10:00 AM EDT)
Attachments: EJ report 2010.pdf; Corpus Christi Gambles on Coal Exports Report (1).pdf

Please forward something to me today that lists Colonias issues. The last call is tomorrow with federal agencies. the meeting is next week

thanks

Jeannine Hale, Director
Office of Environmental Justice and Tribal Affairs
Region VI EPA (6RA-DA)
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75202
Tel. 214.665.2136 (office)
Cell 214.864.6134
Fax 214.665.2124

This document may contain attorney work product, attorney-client communications, or other information that is privileged/confidential. Please do not forward, copy, disclose or distribute this document or any part thereof except as authorized by Sender or other agency legal counsel.

----- Forwarded by Jeannine Hale/R6/USEPA/US on 04/11/2012 10:43 AM -----

Rescheduled: Corpus IWG planning mtg.
Thu 04/12/2012 9:00 AM -
10:00 AM

Attendance is **required** for Jeannine Hale

Chair: Sherri White/DC/USEPA/US

Sherri White has rescheduled this meeting. You have not yet responded.

Required:

Amber.Blaha@usdoj.gov, andrew.hagelin@us.army.mil, Andre.Lewis@ed.gov, Brenda.Kragh@dot.gov, Charlotte.Gish@hhs.gov, Cunningham.Christi@dol.gov, Dorris Riddick/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, eric.benderson@sba.gov, George Pettigrew/R6/USEPA/US@EPA, Israel Anderson/R6/USEPA/US@EPA, james.dickens@hhs.gov, Jeannine Hale/R6/USEPA/US@EPA, JRoberson@doc.gov, kharagan@law.utexas.edu, Loretta_Sutton@ios.doi.gov, Loveen.Bains@ed.gov, Melinda.Downing@hq.doe.gov, Patrick.Holmes@osec.usda.gov, Quentin.Pair@usdoj.gov, Rachel.J.Thornton@hud.gov, Rachel.T.Kirby@hud.gov, Rebecca.Higgins@dot.gov, Robert.Furlong@osd.mil, rock.salt@us.army.mil, Ron.Milam@hhs.gov, sandra.howard@hhs.gov, Scott.Shuchart@DHS.GOV, sharlene.reed@dot.gov, Shelley.R.Poticha@hud.gov, Stacy.Harper@hhs.gov, Sunaree.K.Marshall@hud.gov, suziecanales@att.net, tejada@airalliancehouston.org, teresa.pohlman@HQ.DHS.GOV, willie_taylor@ios.doi.gov

Time zones:

This entry was created in a different time zone. The time in that time zone is: Thu 04/12/2012 10:00 AM EDT11:00 AM EDT

Federal IWG partners please join this call if you are available. I have included some background materials for your information. I will coordinate on putting together a packet of information that will include anticipated questions that may be asked during the standstill dialogue.

Update: I will send the save the date for the April 19th meeting later today as well as an additional list of issues next week.

Sherri

Call in: 866-299-3188
PIN: 2146652136

Corpus Christi's Refinery Row is a 10 mile stretch of heavy industry containing the largest cluster of major oil refineries in the United States. Located in this immense industrial district are classic Environmental Justice (EJ) communities. According to the 2000 census, the majority of the EJ residents along refinery row are people of color and low-income.

One such community, the Hillcrest community was originally affluent; however, in the late 1930s the refineries began to be built on the eastern end of what is now referred to as refinery row, in turn, residents of this affluent community began to move away from the industry and the City zoned the area for African-Americans – a classic environmental racist situation.

The coming decades brought more refineries, supporting chemical plants and other facilities and additional communities sprung up in proximity to industry, communities like Dona Park and Academy Heights. In the 1970s I-37 was built. This compounded the problem for refinery row residents as the highway methodically cut off these communities from the rest of Corpus Christi.

For several decades these communities have had to endure more than their fair share of pollution, health problems, explosions, smoking flares, vibrations, contaminated groundwater and petroleum coke in their homes and property. Moreover most of the facilities store and use the deadly chemical hydrogen fluoride, a chemical capable of creating another Bhopal catastrophe. Because of ever increasing neighboring facilities involving the release of HF, people live in constant fear of dying due to a release of this highly toxic chemical. Through the years the topic of buy-outs has come and gone. In the late 1990s one fence-line community, the Oak Park Triangle community, was relocated by Citgo refinery, but still Hillcrest, Dona Park and Academy Heights and Tuloso Rd. remain.

It is our obligation to ensure that the residents of the EJ communities along refinery row that desire to relocate away from heavy industry at a fair price, be able to do so. Dr. Al Armendariz, US EPA Regional Administrator for Region 6 deemed that these communities are disproportionately close to heavy industry^[i] and that they bear more pollution than people that live away^[ii]. The face of Corpus Christi's north side where refinery row is located will soon change due to the construction of a new Harbor Bridge. The Texas Department of Transportation cites one of the desired outcomes of building a new bridge that is higher in elevation than the existing one is to help local industry by bringing in larger ships^[iii]. Therefore, the environmental fate for these already overburdened communities is bleak when you consider the cumulative impact of living by an expanding industrial district and the additional noise and pollution the new Harbor Bridge will inevitably bring.

Issues for consideration by federal partners in preparation for upcoming IWG meeting

One issue that I have discussed with Suzie is the possible increase in coal exports moving through the Port of Corpus Christi. I think this would be an excellent issue for the IWG to work through. I have attached a report recently published by Sierra Club. Although this is a policy push piece by an organization not directly participating in the IWG at this point, I think it raises some very serious questions for Corpus Christi that should also be raised to participating federal agencies - particularly Commerce, Transportation, EPA and USACE.

In particular:

1. Can Commerce provide some higher level review of US coal exports over time in terms of market volatility?
2. Do USACE and the Port of Corpus Christi have a plan for accommodating the excess water traffic that this level commodity export would bring to an already crowded shipping channel?
3. Is USDOT working with the Port and rail companies to estimate the excess load such trade would place on existing rail infrastructure and what possible side-effects an increase in such rail traffic would have on safety and quality of life in neighboring residential areas?
4. Can EPA provide input on the excess health burden such trade would bring to Corpus Christi's fenceline neighborhoods? What, if any, steps such an expansion would have to take in terms of environmental permitting? Should such trade development at Corpus Christi's port, will EPA push for extra control measures such as: cold-ironing at the new docking facilities, ensuring locomotives are of a later engine vintage or are at the least retrofitted to minimize diesel PM, any sort of extra dust/PM measures for the coal piles and transferring processes?

I hope that by focusing on a specific potential issue it will focus some of these agencies, such as DOT and Commerce, to be considering the impact of existing trade and transportation on local communities.

Now that everyone has had a couple of weeks to read the report and brief overview, please share with us how your E.J. Strategy addresses our EJ issues? In other words, how will your EJ Strategy guide you to achieve Environmental justice in Corpus Christi?

HUD: Your website:

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/sustainable_housing_communities/HUD_Draft_Environmental_Justice_Report states, in part, "The environmental review must determine if the proposed site or neighborhood suffers from disproportionate and adverse health and environmental effects relative to the community at large. If the project is likely to raise environmental justice issues or has the potential for new or continued disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects on minority or low-income populations, the environmental review must consider mitigation or avoidance of adverse impacts from the project to the extent practicable." Yet there are several HUD sponsored apartments in refinery row, like Lantana Square, Sea Breeze Sr. Apartments, Terra Gonna. In addition, North Side Manor is proposed to be rebuilt; the proposed location would place it even close to the refinery.

Department of Transportation/FHA: Refinery Row EJ communities bears more than their fair share of pollution and adverse health impacts. Your agencies have a renewed commitment to achieve environmental justice. How can you implement your EJ Strategy in Corpus Christi when the Harbor Bridge Project will bring more environmental burden to these communities?

Department of Homeland Security: Corpus Christi refineries use and store vast amounts of Hydrofluoric Acid (HF) and put Corpus Christi at needless risk. Under the right conditions, an HF release from a facility has the potential to wipe out most of Corpus Christi. When considering there are alternatives to using HF, how can Homeland Security justify the use of such a deadly chemical in a high targeted area like the Port of Corpus Christi?